



News From

Maggie Brooks

Monroe County Executive

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BROOKS LAUNCHES MAJOR COUNTY REFORESTATION EFFORT

2,000 trees to be planted at Mendon Ponds Park

Today in a field at Mendon Ponds Park, County Executive **Maggie Brooks** launched the Monroe County Reforestation Program, a major local reforestation effort. She was joined by representatives from the County Parks, Environmental Services and Human Services Departments, as well as individuals from the Rochester Landscape Technicians Program.

The new initiative will kick off with the planting of 2,000 bare-root evergreen trees in a portion of Mendon Ponds Park. Planting started on May 5th, and will continue until May 16th.

*"The Monroe County Reforestation Program is an exciting and tangible component of our overall green initiative," said **Brooks**. "This introductory project will benefit Mendon Ponds Park by enhancing the forest area and improving the environment."*

The New York State Department of Conservation donated the evergreen trees to Monroe County for this effort. Clients from the County's Work Experience Program (WEP) will plant the trees, and will receive training and supervision from the Rochester Landscape Technicians Program. The Monroe County Parks Department will oversee the project.

*"The County Reforestation Program benefits our community in many ways," concluded **Brooks**. "By planting trees at Mendon Ponds Park, we improve air and water quality in Monroe County. By training Work Experience Program clients, the County helps these individuals gain useful skills that can assist them in securing future employment. Lastly, by initiating this program and ensuring its continuation, we demonstrate to all County residents our commitment to a green, sustainable community."*

Upon successful completion of the reforestation project in Mendon Ponds Park, the County will identify additional reforestation opportunities in other County Parks, which could be scheduled for Fall 2008 and Spring 2009.

Measurable Benefits of Trees:

- Each mature tree in the average Northeastern forest can offset 20 to 50 pounds of carbon dioxide. (*Environmental Protection Agency*)

- Planting trees leads to improved water quality because of less run-off and erosion. This allows more recharging of the natural ground water supply (aquifers) and ultimately saves money and the environment. *(US Department of Agriculture - Forestry)*
- Wooded areas (vs. turf grass) help to prevent the transport of sediment and pollutants into our streams. Because our streams impact our drinking water supply, cleaner streams mean less treatment and less cost. *(US Geological Survey)*
- One acre reforested with native trees absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen. This is enough to meet the annual consumption needs of 18 adults. *(US Department of Agriculture)*
- A tree planted on the west side of your house can lower your energy costs by 3 percent in the first five years. In 15 years it can lower them by 12 percent. *(Center for Urban Forest and Research)*
- Planting trees can help cool your home in the summer. The Arbor Day Foundation states that the overall effect of the shade created by planting a healthy tree is equivalent to 10 room-size air conditioners running 20 hours a day.
- In the winter, trees can act as windbreaks for your home and will help you save on heating costs. The Journal of Horticulture claims that savings can reach as much as 25 percent.

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